

did not extend to the brickwork. The arch that first gave way was where the ballast was being put on, which leads to the surmise that they had not loaded the arches properly, and since this portion of the work (the last built) had been done in wet weather, and open to the rain of several weeks before the concrete was put in the arches, the mortar was necessarily weakened, and remained unset. The resident engineer fancies the foundations gave way. Some of the French papers attribute the accident to the use of bad materials. At present all is surmise respecting the cause. The French Government has ordered a rigid inquiry into the affair, and by competent persons. It is only fair, therefore, to wait the report of the commissioners, and the reply which the chief engineer will no doubt make to it, when we shall again revert to the subject.

FALL OF A BRIDGE ON THE SOUTH EASTERN RAILWAY.—This unfortunate occurrence, following so closely on the heels of the disaster in France, has induced much alarm. The cause of the failure of the bridge is not yet understood, some attributing it to the floods, others to the original construction. It was a kind of viaduct, resting on brickwork abutments, which passed over the Medway valley, near Tunbridge. A similar accident happened in Belgium a few years ago, when the line was first opened.

BRISTOL ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS.

THE report read at the first annual meeting of the members of this Academy, to which we alluded last week, and the remarks made by various speakers on the occasion, referred to the erection of a fitting building for the purposes of the Academy. "The committee believe that it would be attended with very beneficial results, and their only hesitation is founded on the limited extent of the funds of the Academy, and on their anxiety that nothing done at this time should prove an embarrassment to the period—not, they trust, very far distant,—when a larger outlay being justified by the increased means of the society, a building in every way worthy of its objects might be erected. In the meantime, however, they are sensible that annual expenses will be incurred, which the possession of a suitable building would prevent; and they entertain a strong belief that the announcement of a determination to proceed in its erection in the approaching spring would be highly agreeable to the donors and subscribers."

A room for the study of the life-model is open three evenings in the week. "The study of the old masters has been pursued at the Victoria rooms, where Mr. Miles has kindly deposited pictures for that purpose, during five days in the week, and it is proposed that this shall be continued during the winter months." "On every Thursday this room has been set apart for the establishment of a ladies' class, for studying from the life, under the direction of an artist." "It is hoped by the committee that classes for perspective may soon be formed, calculated as they are to be eminently serviceable to a great number of young persons, who sketch and draw as amateurs, and seldom go through the essential steps leading to accuracy of delineation. As an object of the highest importance, the committee have especially directed their attention to the establishment of prizes, to be competed for during the present year. To this they have appropriated 55*l.* and they are glad to state that other funds have been placed at their disposal, for this object, to the amount of 65*l.*; making a sum of 120*l.* to be contended for at the next exhibition."

The treasurer's cash account showed the income to have been as follows:—Receipts of the exhibition of paintings, including sale of catalogues, 205*l.* 9*s.*; donations, 1,191*l.*; subscriptions, 97*l.* 5*s.*; and dividend on stock, 60*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.*; total, 1,554*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.* The expenditure, 321*l.* 0*s.* 9*d.*; leaving in the banker's hands a balance of 1,233*l.* 9*s.* 9*d.* So far the report.

The local papers contain statements as to a difference of opinion that has arisen amongst the members, and which involves rather an important principle. In November last Mr. West, the keeper of the observatory at Clifton, an artist, and a man of considerable natural ability,

proposed two gentlemen for election. Their talents as artists were allowed; but because one of them held a place of small emolument under government he was opposed, and a "determination" to the effect that any one in trade, place, or situation is ineligible as an artist member, was carried by the artists present. In consequence of this, Mr. West felt himself virtually excluded, and resigned. In reply to a request from the members, that he would reconsider his resignation, he addressed to them a communication, from which the following is an extract:—"As you hope to be patronised you should shew the public you deserve it by rejecting at once and for ever the narrow gauge of exclusiveness, which you are now on; it cramps all energies, has an uneasy progress, and is a long time on the road. Adopt the broad gauge of a liberal feeling for art, and your success and progress, as a body, in the public estimation, will be much more easy, rapid, safe, and certain. Fling aside the mean prejudice, that because a man by necessity is obliged to follow a trade or hold an office, whatever his talent may be, 'you'll have none of it.' Remember Chantry was a ploughboy; Bird for a long time after he was able to produce talented work was a ten-tray painter; was Lord Lansdowne disgraced in having the weaver poet Thom at his table—a journeyman weaver then as he is now? There are many such precedents and examples. Where would Bird, Chantry, and Thom have been had all held the absurd doctrine, that while a weaver—no poet; while a ten-tray painter—no artist? Where would most of our talented artists have been if all had adopted the 'narrow principle' that now appears to actuate the majority of you? Adopt the advice I respectfully offer to you as a body. By your own patronage and help to art, you will appear before the Bristol public as a lesson or an example—you will take an elevated position. Keep your exclusive feeling, and the city will look down upon you perhaps with contempt. Endeavour to assist talented individuals when or where they may be discovered; honour yourselves by making them and claiming them as one of your own; rescue ability or genius when depressed by poverty; fear no shame to grasp in fellowship the hand of talent, however fortune may have disguised it."

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

ST. MARGARET'S church, Ipswich, is now undergoing considerable improvement. The whole of the pews will be removed, and open benches substituted; the lower part of the east window, which has been blocked up for more than a century, is to be re-opened and furnished with new tracery; and the whole church is to undergo a purification from whitewash, which the zeal of former churchwardens had given it. The western gallery will most probably be removed, as it not only disfigures the church, but impairs its stability. The alterations are being made mainly through the liberality of Mr. W. C. Fonnereau, under the superintendence of Mr. Ringham. Water-works upon an extensive scale are about to be constructed at Great Yarmouth. Mr. Thomas Wicksteed is the engineer. The Dundee water-works are being prosecuted with energy. The large reservoir and clean-water basin at Craigton Muir, on the Panmure estate, are considerably advanced; and, by the liberality of Lord Panmure, every facility will be given in execution of the work. The space to be covered by the reservoir will extend to about ninety or one hundred acres. The London and Birmingham Railway Company have presented 150*l.* towards the repairs of the church of St. John, Coventry. It was presented in answer to an application for voluntary assistance. This is the only church in Coventry without a steeple. The new barracks at Preston being finished, it is expected that the Lancashire Militia will shortly take possession of them. It is confidently expected that the north wing of the University College Hospital will be commenced during the approaching spring. It is calculated to cost 4,000*l.* the whole of which with the exception of about 600*l.* is already subscribed for. At Wickham-market, on new year's day, was laid the first stone of a new subscription building, to be appropriated to various public purposes. Much form and ceremony was used on the occasion.

—A very large mill which was in the course of erection at Scarro Foot, near Kendal, was almost entirely destroyed last week by a severe gale of wind and rain. A fortnight ago, the upper story of a brick-built stable, in the occupation of Mr. Wood, Doncaster, fell with a tremendous crash. The immediate cause of the accident is not stated. Fortunately, no lives were sacrificed. It is in contemplation to erect a new police station at Swindon, to consist of entrance-hall, rooms for superintendent &c., with a justice room above, and two wings containing cells for prisoners. The estimate for the building, excluding the site, is 500*l.* The magistrates at present administer justice at a public-house. The ancient church of Colemar, near Alton, Hants, has lately undergone complete restoration. The roof has been stripped and repaired; the timbers freed from whitewash, stained, and varnished; so ancient transept, long desecrated, has been restored; and the whole of the church has been repaved, and provided with low seats of a very simple character. A testimonial to the venerable Sir Charles Morgan, Bart., will shortly be erected on one of the heights of Tredegar-park. It is to be a column, which will command a view of the British Channel, and a considerable portion of South Wales. Sir B. Hall, of Llanowen, is chairman of the committee to carry out the project, and has subscribed 100 guineas towards it. The new church at Malvern Link, Worcestershire, was consecrated last week by the Bishop of Worcester. The font, which is spoken of as being "novel and elegant," was a donation of the Countess Somers. The Earl Somers gave not only sufficient land for the site, but also 500*l.* towards the endowment. Considerable improvements at West Ham are in contemplation, among which may be mentioned the erection of a public hall, and the establishment of gas works sufficiently extensive to insure the whole district being well lighted. It is proposed attempting to raise, by the proceeds of a bazaar, the existing deficiency of 1,000*l.* in the sum required to enlarge and improve St. Nicholas's Church, Yarmouth. A company has been formed within the last fortnight, whose object is to convert the Warwick and Birmingham Canal into a railroad. Sir John Macneil is the engineer. Among the projects of the past week is one which contemplates the construction of very capacious wet docks, with an extensive range of wharves, at Plymouth. A company is forming with this object in view. Mr. J. K. Brunel is the engineer.

CHRONOLOGY OF EGYPTIAN MONUMENTS.

EVERY day increases our knowledge of Egypt, and our means of further increasing that knowledge. The "Literary Gazette" of last week (recently enlarged, cheapened, and improved) reports a very important communication, made by Mr. Birch to the Royal Society of Literature, on the Egyptian obelisk in the At-Meidan at Constantinople, which throws a new and striking light upon the annals and chronology of Egypt, in connection with Bible history. The hieroglyphics record the fact, that Thothmosis III., the erector of the memorial, who reigned 1736 years a.c., had pushed his conquests as far as Nabaraim, or Mesopotamia. The monolith shrine, commonly called the sanctuary of Karnac (which is now in the *magasin* of the Louvre), is a monument of the same reign; and Mr. Birch announced that he had examined the copy of the long hieroglyphic inscription which covers it, published by the society in 1823, and found it refer to the same transaction. He also announced the important fact, that he had found there the names of the two chief cities of ancient Mesopotamia, Babylon and Nineveh. The latter had before been read by Champollion on another monument; the former is Mr. Birch's own discovery. Mr. Osburn, than whom there is no Egyptian scholar more competent to give an authoritative opinion, took the opportunity of congratulating the society upon this first step towards any thing like precise information on the subject of the foreign names inscribed on the monuments of ancient Egypt. He also explained that another foreign name, occurring in the inscription on the sanctuary, written in hieroglyphics by the consonants *r, d, and n*, he had himself ascertained to be that of the founders of Aradus, an